

# CSInsider

Child Saving Institute News | Fall 2011

## Opening their hearts and home... Answering the call to foster

**The Throckmortons completed the Foster Parent training class this summer and have now welcomed two young foster kids into their home.**

There are major transitions occurring at the Throckmorton home in historic Florence in northeast Omaha this fall. They have welcomed two young foster children into their home (ages 5 and 19 months) and are working to adjust to all the changes.

Kelly and Robert Throckmorton have been married 13 years and have two great kids—Richard, 8, and BreAnn, 11. They are a happy, active family, but they wanted to share the love. “We’ve always wanted a big family,”

Kelly says, “and at first we considered having another baby, then we looked at adoption, but finally we decided we should really consider being a foster family first.”

“Since the ultimate goal of fostering is reunification, I really like the idea of helping a

person be a better parent, instead of just taking their children away,” Kelly notes. “I like the idea of giving the parents something to work for—getting their kids back.”

With their open attitude, Kelly and Robert began taking CSI’s 10-week Foster Parenting training class in April and completed the course in July. In the weeks before placement, Kelly attempted to ready for the unknown. She

lined up day care, secured a crib, and even made arrangements for ethnic hair styling assistance should

the child have those needs. “Since you don’t know who you’re going to get, I need to be ready for anything,” she explained. “I want these kids to feel welcome and well taken care of in our home.”

“*It’s really, really, REALLY fun! I like having more brothers and sisters.*”

Continued...



The Throckmortons

*BreAnn and Richard Throckmorton go to bed one hour later than their much-younger foster siblings, allowing them a little extra quiet time with mom and dad. Other than that, rules, expectations and affection are distributed equitably among this enthusiastic new foster family.*



**Peg Harriott, President & CEO**

## Life IS Change

Seasons change, kids change and, with your support, *lives change as the result of the programs we offer at CSI.*

We celebrate the transitions of childhood: a baby taking her first wobbly step, losing a tooth, leaning in for a first kiss, acing parallel parking during a driver's test, packing up to head off to college... Most of us made these transitions successfully despite our occasional fears.

But these transitions can be very different for children who grow up in a family that does not provide the nutrition, education, financial support, love and encouragement necessary to help them succeed.

Many of our children face other kinds of transitions, like hunger due to dad losing his job, going to school without the required school supplies, trying unsuccessfully to figure out what they need to do to avoid mom's violent rage, being taken from their home to go to a stranger's house with different smells and different expectations...

With your help and support, CSI's children and families can have successful life transitions. They can heal from past abuse and past failures. They can learn new skills and develop healthy and loving relationships. CSI works from the *child's point of view* when planning transitions. CSI foster parents and staff work to help scared children understand what is happening in their lives. Social workers and therapists work to gain the parent's trust so real learning and change can occur for the entire family. Because of you and donors like you, children and families can get beyond the difficult transitions and move through the "normal" transitions of growing up.

As an agency, CSI is also transitioning as we adapt to the changes of Child Welfare Reform. At the end of the day, we believe improved outcomes are what really matter and the following outcomes *must* be achieved:

- ***Kids, families, and communities are safe.***
- ***Kids belong to a family.***
- ***Kids and families are healthy.***
- ***Kids are out of trouble and living in their home communities.***
- ***Kids are advancing developmentally and educationally.***
- ***Kids are graduating from high school and have career options and plans.***
- ***Kids have a family to launch from and are not left to emancipate alone at age 18.***

With your help, we will continue to work to see that ALL children have homes where hope is kindled and dreams can be achieved. Thank you for joining us on this journey and seeing us through all the growing pains and passages we are all experiencing. We simply couldn't do it without you!

### ***Opening their hearts, continued***

Now, several weeks into their commitment, Kelly admits she's tired, but says she's enjoying the experience. "Going back to the baby stage has been an adjustment," she confesses. "You think of the cuddly and cute of babies, but you somehow forget the work of diapers. It's made me develop an appreciation for the self-sufficiency of older kids."

"It's fun," sixth-grader BreAnn says of her new role as foster sister. "I get to help out a lot and it's preparing me for when I have kids some day."

"It's really, really, *really* fun," confirms Richard. "I like having more brothers and sisters." That's quite magnanimous of him, considering he now has a crib in his room and has to be quiet when going to bed an hour after the toddler.

Of course, there have been adjustments. Robert and Kelly have had to develop a "divide and conquer" attitude when it comes to scheduling all of the children's activities and appointments. And they are working closely with the birth mother (attending school conferences and doctors' appointments together) to prepare her for the children's safe return around the first of the year.

"It is a different situation and we're learning a lot," Kelly concludes. "We were mainly ready for one and got two instead, but I was unwilling to break up siblings. And the truth is, I don't think we could have received two better kids. They go to bed well; they eat well; and we've even celebrated some milestones, like going off the bottle. We're working it out." ❤️

**If you would like to find out more about foster parenting, please visit [childsaving.org](http://childsaving.org) or call 402.504.3621.**

# so much to learn...

The transitions of childhood are never so apparent as when taking a walk through CSI's Early Childhood Education Center. In one classroom, infants gurgle and coo; in another, toddlers learn to use words to express their feelings; and in still another, preschoolers are learning their ABC's and the elements necessary for plants to grow. It's a magical time at every stage. Join us as we take a closer look at the particularly dramatic changes taking place from 18 to 36 months.



"We try to teach a lot of self-help skills to this age group," notes Early Childhood Senior Specialist Ja'Mese Coty. "When they come in here they are 18 months old and still have many baby tendencies. They often can only make simple sounds when they want something, so they cry to express their needs. Then they start developing vocabulary skills and become more aware of their own personal space and their own feelings and begin to develop the tools they need to deal with issues. The changes are amazing."

“ What makes us different from other centers is our focus on *attachment*. ”

"Most centers focus primarily on academic outcomes," explains Director of Early Childhood Education Dalhia Lloyd. "We implement a lot of research about brain development, and current research indicates that *attachment* is critical for early childhood development. If we can provide our children with healthy relationships with their teachers through loving interactions and continuity of care, it provides the scaffolding for learning."

"If all of us—parents and teachers—have healthy, meaningful relationships with the child, and help them to develop healthy social/emotional well-being, it prepares the child for healthy relationships in school, work and society," Lloyd continues. "Those children who struggle in kindergarten—and then throughout their education—are not successful because they are not socially/emotionally ready to learn and grow in an academic environment. Children who come through our program have the tools they need for success." ♥



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

Make holiday wishes come true for at-risk kids.

**Substitute Santa** is happening December 5th, 6th & 7th. Questions? Call Cali 402.504.3661

Listen to 1290AM on Friday, December 16th for our **Annual KKAR Radiothon!**

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**Have you included CSI in your will?**

Call Becky for details 402.504.3663



# Transitions

